

[Interview with Vito Cacciola #22]

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. . . Interview with

Vito Cacciola

. . .

by

Merton R. Lovett

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“As well as remembered” [2/2/39?] [Beano?]

INTERVIEW WITH VITO CACCIOLA

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by

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(from memory)

. . .

“Sure, I playa de Beano; not much four, five times. It's a nica game. You must be quicka with the numbers. I play two cards and finda it much easy.

“No! I do not believe it's a good to gamble. But I do not think it is gamble to play de beano. In evening I spenda no more than fifty cents. I geta amusement. Sometimes, I am lucky and wina prize.

“Waita one minute, Mr. Lovett. Looka this bed spread. I win him for door prize. Don't you think he's beautiful? On the bed it keepa me warm.

“I would playa Beano some more, but I no finda time. Besides, I cannot afford it. Some peoples play two, three times week. It is too mucha.

“I remembers one woman. She's what you calla de Beano hound. On de Monday night she playa at de Eagle's Beano. Wednesday it is de Elk's where she goes. Saturday she maka game at de Order of Workmans. Not much does she win. She's what you calla unlucky.

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“Her husband Guisipi, he maka de visit each night at his club. He lika de beer. Sometimes he getta, what you call it — yes, plastered. He hava six babinas. He maka good money. Every week he giva his wife ten dollars to buy food and runs de house. All de time de wife losa money with Beano.

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"Guisipi lika de good food. Every day he eata de big dinner. On Sunday he wanta de chicken, two, three chicken; also big pile spaghetti, cabbage, figs, walnuts and wine.

"One Sunday he coma in de kitchen. He look around. Then he say, "Marie, where's a my chicken?' She reply, 'This week I's shorta money. De childrens must hava shoes.' 'All righta,' he say. 'De babinos must hava good shoes. Giva me two bowl of spaghetti and mucha cabbage and wine.'

"Nexta Sunday he ask again, 'What's de matter, Marie, no chickens no more?' She return, 'De childrens must hava now new overshoes. There is no money for chicken or wine.' 'Oh!' he groana. 'How can I maka dinner without de wine, but de babinos is need to keepa de feets dry.' So he eata three bigga plate of spaghetti and mucha cabbage.

"But Maria she losa more money in Beano. So the third Sunday Guisippi coma to table with great appetite. He say, 3 'Marie, you gotta much chicken today? I'ma starv-ed.'

"Oh, Guisippi, I'm so sorry. Dis week de childrens getta cold from de wet feet. De doctor taka my money.'

"By jingo,' he shouta, 'I is getta thin and skinny like de sick cow. I is strong man no more. But we must keepa de babinos in health.' And because there was no chicken, no spaghetti, no cabbage, figs, walnuts or wine, he eata four, five loaves Italian bread and with much sorrow drinka a cup of de water.

"But all de time he maka thoughts. His wife he suspect-ed. Soon he says himself, 'Marie, she maka some monkey business. She buya babinos new shoes. She buya overshoes. How, by de Saints, does they geta wet feet?'

"So de next night, Guisipi saya quick goodbye to his club. He runna hime and whata you think? He no finda Marie. He no finda babinos. He no finda nothing. So he goes out in de

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street and shouta. In long time he finda children. They is throwa stones at de autos and steala bananas from de fruit store.

“Guisipi is mucha angry. He yella, ‘You little crookers. Go in de house. I fixa you later. Where is your mama?’

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“De childrens weepa and say, ‘Mama is in de Eagles. She playa Beano.’

“Quicka he marcha for Eagles. He slama de door. He graba de wife. ‘So here you is,’ he cry. ‘You thief, you cheata, you lazy bum, you no gooda slut!’

“Then he dragga her out. Then he shout, ‘So you steala my money? You maka me starve? You maka me eat bread and drinka water? By G-d I breaka your neck.’

“But Marie maka many tears. She say, ‘De Beano is good game. Some peoples winna much money, but I is unlucky.’

“He maka answer, ‘You is unlucky, huh? You is so dumb you gotta no brains. If I playa that game, by Jingo, I maka much money. You is acta like fool. You getta home and taka care of de babinos. You leava de house again, I slappa you down. I’m a going back to Eagles and winna de money what you lose. We eata chicken de every Sunday. I showa you how Guisipi is smart. I shama you!’

“So you want to know whata happen, Mr. Lovett. Perhaps they hava now no more to eat on Sunday but dandelions. Perhaps not so much. I don’t know. Guisipi is so bigga a fool than Marie.”